

LITURGICAL ARTS

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Editorials

THE USE of motion pictures with sound to depict a solemn mass has often been contemplated. The Servite Fathers, under the sponsorship of the Archdiocese of Chicago, have undertaken such a presentation. In showing a ceremony so beautiful and so sacred it would seem proper to choose a setting as nearly perfect, from the point of view of artistic dignity and good taste, as is humanly possible. Unfortunately this cannot be said of the sanctuary which furnishes a setting for "The Eternal Gift." The altar is a pretentious structure of white marble profusely "embellished" with angels and panels in high relief, the most prominent of which depicts the Last Supper, framed in the front of the altar. The arrangement of this altar is definitely not in accordance with the requirements set down by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, and aside from eschewing the letter of the law, e.g., in the treatment of the tabernacle and the position of the crucifix, certainly the spirit of the law is violated at many points. Various parts of the altar, such as the ponderous canopy over the tabernacle and the medallions below the mensa, are accentuated by electrical effects, pale the candle light into insignificance, and contribute a regrettably theatrical effect to what should be the acme of simplicity and dignity. Against this luminous white background the delicate vestments of the priests count for very little. It should be noted that the vestments are refreshingly free from lace and that the thurifer appreciates the value of clouds of incense, thus elevating this symbolic note to its rightful importance.

The music and the singing of a large and well trained male choir emphasizes the appropriateness of planechant. The *Asperges*, the *Introit*, the gradual, and part of the offertory are Gregorian, and extremely well done. The accompaniment to the balance of the mass is in figured music, the composition, for the most part, of the Reverend Edwin V. Hoover, director of music in the Archdiocese of Chicago. The commentator, whose voice is heard at intervals, stresses the fact that planechant is the official music of the Church. More is the pity that this fact is not often recognized.

There is a curious prelude to the preliminary prayers of the mass. A sizeable amount of film is devoted to the portrayal of a priest in the pulpit, urging the faithful to pray the mass with the priest at the altar, but almost simultaneously, shots are shown of long cues of people attempting to enter the church to attend a perpetual novena. Emphasis is placed upon the success of the novena, but there is no specific indication that this is an extraliturgical event. Neither by inference nor implication can one gather that the novena is in any way secondary, either from the point of view of popularity or importance, to the sacred ceremony about to take place.

As an exposition depicting the ultimate beauty and dignity which may be attained in the reënacting of the holy sacrifice of the mass, the film leaves much to be desired. The wording of the blurb announcing this "ten reel sound movie of Catholic solemn mass" is in the best — or worst — tradition of church goods catalogues. And all this could so easily have been done well!

DURING the early meetings of the founders of the Liturgical Arts Society, some fourteen years ago, the hope was expressed that what we were attempting to do for the improvement of the arts at the service of the Church would soon be recognized. It is fortunate that we should have entertained this optimistic outlook at that time; otherwise we might not have made the attempt. After the first flush of enthusiasm had worn thin, we were confronted with the years of daily and unremitting routine devoted to building up the content of our work. Although the immediate future is not exactly conducive to optimistic musings we can say that the work of the Society is daily being recognized. Of course we have always been blessed with the coöperation of many friends, and the editor here takes the opportunity to state his deep sense of gratitude to all those who so generously contributed the articles that have made LITURGICAL ARTS what it is to-day.

In recent issues of several of our contemporaries, LITURGICAL ARTS has been noted favorably and we are glad to pass on to our readers certain examples of this. In the March, 1942, issue of the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, a reviewer (designated as "E. L.") offers us a few bouquets. He writes that "the tenth anniversary number of LITURGICAL ARTS offers an occasion for tendering sincere congratulations to the Liturgical Arts Society on the very fine work it has been doing in raising the standards of ecclesiastical art, and for expressing the hope that their work become better known to Irish priests and all interested in making the house of God worthy of its sacred

purpose." E. L. ends his short review with these encouraging words, which we heartily endorse: "It is to be hoped that increased support will be given to the editor and his staff to enable them to carry on their praiseworthy campaign."

And our good friend, *Orate Fratres*, in the April 19, 1942, issue, also strikes an encouraging note, but one enlivened with a few brickbats from one of our mutual friends. This friend praises the articles by Geoffrey Webb and Father Lonergan, which appeared in our February issue, but he then writes: ". . . [I must] say something not so nice about the article, 'Alteration — Saint Mary's Church,' with its mixed-up symbolism, pedestrian design and piecemeal understanding, all contradicting the other two writers flagrantly. Also a word about those arty Elizabeth Arden altars and candlesticks from Montreal. May the Lord save us from such sissy art! The W-foot is one of the most maidenish things I ever saw. Golly!" Well, here at least we have an honest opinion. But we enter a demurrer concerning the alteration in Saint Mary's Church. While this work may not be "exciting," it does represent a step in the right direction. As for the "Elizabeth Arden" altars, etc., we will refer our readers to Father Coururier's letter to the editor, published in this issue, and also to Father LaFarge's editorial in the March 28, 1942, issue of *America*. Our chaplain explains that "What may not be grasped by the casual observer of these designs — and if ultra-conservative, probably a critic — is the extent to which this work is spontaneously thought out and carried out by young men who are no sophisticated seekers for the 'different' and the 'effective,' but simply young lads straight from their Quebec farms. These young men plan their furniture, sacred or profane, directly for the purpose each piece has in view. If you do not like what they have done in this instance, they will try their hands at another. But they prefer straight routes to their goal." We must add, however, that the editor of *Orate Fratres* recognizes that LITURGICAL ARTS "has shown a constant concern for the spiritual fundamentals of liturgical life, and this, combined with thoroughly competent artistry, has given it a freshness and creative spontaneity that has made it unique in its field." So.

THE FORM of vestments has often been a vexed problem and seems to narrow down to a quarrel of words, "roman" vs "gothic." In the April,

1942, issue of *The Ecclesiastical Review* appears an excellent article on this subject by the Right Reverend Monsignor Joaquim Nabuco, of Rio de Janeiro. Monsignor Nabuco explores every angle of the problem, and it would seem that those who *know* how to design vestments and who realize that they are something to be *worn* need not worry unduly about the words *roman* or *gothic*. By the way, why not avoid this word *gothic* and merely say *ample*?

EVEN in the midst of war clouds there can be a few silver linings! One of them is the belated realization that we have had craftsmen in this country capable of doing excellent work for the Church. The craze of many for the "imported" and the short-sighted policy of established firms dealing in commercial products have shunted many a good man to other occupations, where he was able to make a decent living even though his talent was largely wasted in uncongenial work. The lack of communication with Europe has now made it necessary to adjust ourselves to local sources of supply, and the pinch is felt. So much the better if this present mess knocks a little sense in the heads of merchants and their clients.

In a recent address to the Oxford Newman Society, John Rothenstein, director of the Tate Gallery, London, remarked that the destruction of churches by nazi bombs offered a unique and unlooked-for opportunity for a nobly planned design of reconstruction and he adds, ". . . the sudden end of the wholesale imports of 'objects of piety' resulting from the war removed the greatest obstacle in the path of progress and offered a brilliant opportunity for the employment of British artists and craftsmen." Change the word British to *American* and you have an answer to many of our own problems. But we ought to insist that the change be for the benefit of the artist and craftsman worth his salt and not for the encouragement of the well-meaning but otherwise incompetent amateur.

THAT THE first liturgical week in the United States, held in Chicago, in 1941, was a great success cannot be denied. Those who attended the meetings will not soon forget them. The "week" was, in a sense, the culmination of many years of hope and effort on the part of many whose faith in human nature and the possibility of some measure of re-

form was stronger than the negative indifference of those whose pessimistic attitude can be summed up in "it can't be done." The second week was held last October in Saint Paul, and from all accounts, it was also a success. The general topic was a continuation of that treated in Chicago — the living parish. The volume of proceedings of the Saint Paul week follows the pattern established by the first one and will be treasured in later years by those who are wise enough to purchase their copy now. The text of one of the papers — "Art in the Living Parish" — by the Reverend Joseph Lonergan, of Clairton, Pennsylvania, appeared in the February, 1942, issue of LITURGICAL ARTS. The other papers are also of great and varied interest, and the discussion notes and comments will help the reader to recapture the atmosphere which prevailed at the meetings. Can we deduce anything useful from the fact that the attendance of the laity greatly increased during the second week? At Chicago three hundred and ninety-one of the laity registered; at Saint Paul, there were seven hundred and eleven. Curiously enough the attendance of the clergy and religious decreased. At Chicago, they numbered eight hundred and fifty-three; at Saint Paul only six hundred and twenty-six. Of course in this connection one must remember that priests and religious are many times more numerous in the Chicago area than near the Twin Cities. When all allowances are made, however, it may well be that the laity are showing themselves quicker to catch the significance of the liturgical weeks than the clergy. That is another reason for praising the initiative shown last summer at the Mundelein seminary in conducting a school of liturgy for priests and future priests.

THE BEST police job can be done by those who are willing to discipline themselves, with a minimum of outside interference. This is true in business and perhaps, to a lesser extent, in the pursuit of the elusive arts. The Stained Glass Association of America has recently issued a code of ethics, which we reproduce below for the guidance of architects and clients. After all, their coöperation is necessary if such a code is to function properly.

INASMUCH as the stained glass craft is one of the handmaids of architecture, this association favors the principle of architectural direction in the matter of the selection and purchase of stained glass.

We believe that the best interests of the client and of the craft are served when the number of craftsmen invited to submit sketches is held to the smallest possible number, with a maximum of three bidders.

We believe that ideal conditions will prevail when only one craftsman studies the problem with the architect and owner. This condition fosters mutual confidence as well as the most practical and economical procedure. Should this craftsman fail to satisfy the architect or owner with his sketches, he should be willing to withdraw, without compensation, thus permitting another craftsman to enjoy the full cooperation of the owner.

When more than one craftsman is invited to submit sketches, we urgently recommend issuance of a formal invitation giving the following information:

- (1) The names of the craftsmen invited.
- (2) The price per square foot or the price per window contemplated.
- (3) The size and number of sketches required.*
- (4) The date on which submissions are to be received.

The wording of this code of ethics is flattering to the architect and the owner and evidences a rather startling measure of humility on the part of the members of the Stained Glass Association of America. If all concerned really cooperate, all will be well, and human nature may receive a much needed halo.

SCHOLARSHIP can be ponderous, pedantic, and pedestrian, or it can carry itself in a manner more attuned to the normal needs of a cultivated person and with vigor of style and breadth of vision. For this reason *Franciscan Studies*, a quarterly review published by the Franciscan Educational Conference at Saint Bonaventure, New York, is always a welcome arrival in this editorial sanctum. The subjects treated in each issue are not always directly related to liturgical matters, but they certainly contribute to that breadth of vision that should be the normal attitude of any student of the liturgy and of the liturgical revival at the present time. Such an attitude makes for a balanced frame of mind, and this is needed if we are to avoid the pettyfogging squabbles that can so easily damn any undertaking. Let those sincerely interested in the liturgical movement evince an interest, once in a while, in such matters as the "Economic Significance of the Montes Pietatis"; the "Economic Problem of the Family"; the "Cult of the Mother of God in the Byzantine Liturgy"; "Cardinal Fisher and Duns Scotus" — all so interestingly treated in the

* Any one of the members of the association will be glad to assist in the setting up of a budget and will give advice as to the practical size and number of sketches needed.

September, 1941, issue of *Franciscan Studies*. A well balanced diet of church history and contemporary social problems will benefit anyone and will help to avoid that "freezing of the mind" that leads us too often to pigeonhole our thoughts in air-tight compartments where the twain shall never meet.

For the same reason we also bow to the acumen of the editors of another valuable publication — *Mediaeval Studies* (Volume III, 1941). It is sponsored by that fountainhead of knowledge, the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, of Toronto, Canada, and we are glad to record the fact that many of the authors of articles in this particular issue of *Mediaeval Studies* have already contributed valuable book reviews and articles to LITURGICAL ARTS: Gerhart B. Ladner, G. B. Flahiff, Otto Bird, Jacques Maritain. At times LITURGICAL ARTS has been accused of being a trifle high-hat, and it has been suggested that we urge our authors to write "down" to the level of the ordinary reader. This we will not do for the simple reason that we are convinced that the intelligence of readers has been greatly underestimated. Moreover a modicum of intellectual discipline is good for everyone, and a person of average education could well derive benefit and enjoyment from several of the articles in this volume of *Mediaeval Studies*. For example: "A Romantic Approach to the Middle Ages" by Professor E. K. Rand, of Harvard University; "The So-Called Square Nimbus" by Gerhart B. Ladner; "L'Humanisme de Saint Thomas d'Aquin" by Jacques Maritain. Professor Rand's article will be welcomed by all those interested in a sane understanding of the middle ages, and even simon-pure "modernists" could agree with the author's thought on the subject; painters and decorators, workers in stained glass, and others can find valuable material in the article on the "square" nimbus, and Maritain's words on Saint Thomas will be appreciated by those who want to balance their understanding of the present with an appreciation of the thought of a master of universal knowledge.

IN THE first volume of LITURGICAL ARTS there appeared a series of articles on the history of art by Charles Rufus Morey, professor of art and archaeology, Princeton University. Our readers will recall that these articles were later edited and published in book form under the title *Christian Art*. Later we were

also indebted to Princeton for valuable information and photographs in connection with the illustrated articles on the craftsmanship of sacred vessels, which appeared in the January, 1933, issue of our quarterly and which have been, and still are, available in a reprint. Much of the data which formed the backbone of Professor Morey's articles and those on sacred vessels was drawn from what is known as the "Index of Christian Art at Princeton University." This index was begun in 1917 and grew out of the iconographic research actively pursued in the department of art and archaeology at Princeton during the years 1910-1917, and at first was planned only as a listing of subjects and objects of early Christian art with a time limit of about 700 A.D. As the research in mediaeval art expanded, the new demands enlarged progressively the scope of the Index until it was finally organized to include the whole of mediaeval Christian art, to the year 1400.

While it is true that one of the activities of the Liturgical Arts Society is an information service, it is obviously impossible for us to be masters of every subject. After all no one can be a walking encyclopedia, although the type and variety of questions received by the Secretary seem to indicate a belief that the apparatus of scholarship and the knowledge of the Society is fathomless. This is very flattering but quite untrue. In the past we have tried to do our best and will continue to do so in the future, but if any of our readers and their friends find themselves puzzled by certain details of iconography, dating from the year one to 1400, we suggest that they avail themselves of the store of information gathered at Princeton. If that source of information should fail them — and we doubt it — then they can return to the welcoming arms of the Liturgical Arts Society and its generous collaborators.

WE HAVE all been aware of the work accomplished by the Monterey Guild during the past decade in the design and execution of altars, tabernacles, and general appurtenances used in the sanctuary. The director and prime mover of this group, Miss Charlton Fortune, has now transferred her activities to Kansas City, under the patronage of the Most Reverend Edwin V. O'Hara. It is a pleasure to record the news that Charlton Fortune has delivered a series of eight lectures at the College of Saint Teresa, Kansas City, Missouri, on the

function and significance of the liturgical movement and related artistic manifestations. We envy those who attended these lectures, because Miss Fortune's mode of expression and her common sense have no doubt helped to instill in her audience certain fundamental principles that must be followed if we are to avoid exaggerations and arty vagaries. Of course, half the battle is won when the ordinary of a diocese is so directly sympathetic to the spread of ideas which actuate the liturgical revival. If this Kansas City example should spread throughout the dioceses in the United States, we may yet witness the growth of an "atmosphere" in which artists could properly function to the benefit of all those concerned with the arts at the service of the Church.

Further word reaches us concerning the opportunity afforded Miss Fortune to speak informally to many pastors in the Kansas City diocese. Sympathetic collaboration of this sort is invaluable. Miss Fortune was also invited to speak at the Catholic sectional meeting of the Western Arts Association.

IT HAS LONG been the hope of the editors of LITURGICAL ARTS to publish a comprehensive article on the way of the cross, and we had hoped to illustrate such an article with many reproductions of examples of contemporary work throughout the world. However, events of the past year made it impossible to include so many photographs, and it is only now that we can offer a consideration of this subject which should be of interest to our readers.

It is due to the kindness of Messrs Sheed and Ward that we can publish

the chapter on the stations of the cross from Caryl Houselander's book, *This War Is the Passion*, and the illustration of one panel of the way of the cross by Suzanne Nicholas is an excellent rendition of the thought expressed by Miss Houselander.

The evolution of Polish religious art is described by Irena Piotrowska, who is connected with the Kosciuszko Association in America, and Michael Tarnowski, a scholarly amateur whose book on excavations in Ceylon was well received some years ago.

The competition for a statue of Christ, the Light of the World, is described in a composite article by those who have been connected with the evolution of this important undertaking.

The illustrated article by Oscar Ogg on "holy" cards will undoubtedly yield interesting material for those who have long hoped for some improvement in this important field of religious art. Mr Ogg is a noted calligrapher also known for his work in book design.

Barry Byrne's paper explaining the idea of a new church plan ought to elicit great interest among those pastors who may be tempted to create a much needed precedent in the field of architecture.

Finally, Father Couturier's letter to the editor may clear up certain criticisms which were received concerning the illustrations of the exhibition of work done by pupils at the École du Meuble in Montreal reproduced in our last issue.

Elizabeth Lourié, whose icon supplies us with a frontispiece, is the wife of the eminent Russian-French composer, Arthur Lourié.

do with design, craftsmanship, and execution are placed in the hands of those who by reason of training are especially qualified to do the job, and who, at the same time, hold a high regard for the integrity of their profession.

In most instances the architect, or artisan, can be readily selected by dint of such assiduous investigation as one might employ in looking up a new doctor. From time to time, however, there arises a problem which, by reason of its quasi-public character, or its heroic dimensions, requires that the best available talent be obtained through competition rather than arbitrary award. There are, indeed, many instances where this method is to be recommended, but with the qualification that the competition be conducted along strictly professional lines, under the guidance of someone amply qualified, and disinterested to the extent that the only aim is to secure the best possible results without prejudice in favor of the owner or those invited to compete. An informal competition conducted by an owner is hopeless, and unless funds are available to employ a director for a competition, it had better not be undertaken. No layman is qualified to select the competitors, much less the jury. Writing a program demands the highest understanding of the technical phases of the work to be performed, plus a regard for the legal implications which such an agreement entails. To mention a few of the more practical considerations: the printing and mailing of the program requires competent handling, the delivery and return of photographs and other documents must be carefully provided for, and finally—a measure of dignified and effective publicity. No matter how carefully worded a program may be, there are the inevitable questions from contestants, and these must be answered by bulletins sent to every competitor so that all will receive the same elucidation. In addition to the award, sufficient cash prizes must be provided. If members of the jury do not happen to live in the city specified for the eventual meeting of the jury, it becomes necessary to defray the expenses of transportation for each juror, as well as the living expenses during the time the jury holds its sessions.

The question as how to justify so expensive a procedure may naturally be raised. In answer it may be said that the means justify the end solely on the basis of the quality of the work thus

A Competition for a Statue of Christ, the Light of the World

ANYONE familiar with the activities of the Liturgical Arts Society is well aware that there have been many instances when, in response to urgent pleas from frustrated pastors, the Society has undertaken to guide them in the matter of sanctuary furnishings and related objects. And such pleas and inquiries have come from all parts of the country. Frequently such inquiries come

from priests in remote parishes, where professional advice is not easily obtainable. If these efforts on the part of the Liturgical Arts Society have been successful in imparting a mark of distinction to church design it is because simple, almost elemental rules have been adhered to. Not the least important of these rules is to insist that best results are attained when matters having to

obtained. It is fair to assume that even the most adroit artisan or designer will be inspired to greater efforts by the knowledge that he is competing with talent commensurable with his own. With the exception of the few cash awards, the competitor's only chance of bettering himself financially and professionally is to win the award, and the responsibility for this rests entirely with him. Instances are well known in which a relatively obscure artist has not only qualified for the competition, but has won it with a contribution which is fresh in its inspiration beyond all expectations. Without the competition this result would not have been likely.

Therefore when we consider the innumerable pieces of sculpture of indifferent not to say inferior quality upon which large sums of money have been expended, and when awards have been made without the benefit of proper advice, the additional expenditure appears to be justifiable. The medium of sculpture is here emphasized because it concerns the part played by the Liturgical Arts Society in conducting the competition for the statue of Christ, the Light of the World, to be erected in front of the new headquarters building for the National Catholic Welfare Conference in Washington, D. C.

Sculpture is so prominent in the arts at the service of the Church, and the examples we see are so often disappointing, that it is a matter of extreme gratification that the committee of bishops in charge of the work should have recognized the importance of doing all that is humanly possible to enlist the best available talent for the eventual execution of so important a statue. The new building constitutes a sufficiently prominent addition to the architecture of the nation's capital to warrant the procedure of a competition, and the subject matter is one to call forth the most deft ingenuity on the part of the sculptors. The architect and the owners are to be congratulated for their prudence and the Liturgical Arts Society can feel proud in being selected for the important rôle of conducting the competition. It would be anticipating too much to predict the result, but it is safe to hope that the Son of God will be portrayed with befitting dignity.

JOSEPH SANFORD SHANLEY
President, Liturgical Arts Society, Inc.

ONE OF THE principal motives for the work of the Liturgical Arts Society since its beginning has been the desire

to see in action a satisfactory method governing the relationship of the artist with his ecclesiastical patrons. This matter has frequently been discussed in the columns of the Society's quarterly, always with the view of promoting such policies as are wholly and competently fair to the wishes of the patron himself, to the ability, taste, and discretion of the artist or architect, and, finally, to the public for whose edification and contemplation the work is naturally destined.

The present competition, therefore, is particularly welcome to all those who are sympathetic with the work of the Society. As far as is humanly possible, it undertakes to safeguard the interests of all concerned in each of the directions just mentioned. The manner in which the competition is conducted enables the artist to develop freely his ideas, regardless of whether he will actually obtain or not the proposed commission. It ensures a first-rate work of art. Finally, it places at the disposal of the ecclesiastical patron a wide, and what is most important, an entirely objective choice, with the services of a competent jury.

Inevitably, it would seem, the Church's own honor and prestige is heightened by the adoption of such a plan. Special interest, of course, attaches to this competition because of the prominent and unique character of the place which the statue is destined to fill. It will, undoubtedly, become symbolic in the Catholic life of the nation; will be seen and viewed by multitudes as an expression of what the Church herself stands for.

For the Society itself, there is great encouragement in the trust reposed in it by the committee of bishops. It is a hand laid upon our shoulder; not a mere casual gesture, but the hand of authority, to which we look for guidance and for confirmation of our own aims. With so notable an endorsement, the Society looks forward to seeing the competition serve as an example to many similar projects carried on in like spirit under varied auspices among different groups in the United States. We feel confident that this hope will be fulfilled.

The REVEREND JOHN LAFARGE, S.J.
Chaplain, Liturgical Arts Society, Inc.

THE PROGRAM for a competition is a highly important matter. Experience has shown that it must be prepared with the greatest care in order that the interests of the owners shall be fully

protected, and at the same time all the competitors shall have equal chance and that the awards shall be made on merit alone.

The National Sculpture Society was glad to assist in the preparation of the program for the competition for this proposed statue of Christ, the Light of the World, especially as the Society was consulted *before* the situation had been complicated by previous commitments, as is so often the case.

How important this is from a sculptor's point of view is shown by the following little realized fact, namely: that in making his studies and the scale model for a serious bit of work, the sculptor may well spend weeks, or even months, and at considerable expense. In a competition having many entrants, such as for this statue of Christ, he realizes that the odds are against his winning even one of the lesser prizes. No wonder then that he considers the program, and the judges, of great importance.

It is our hope and belief that the program is a good one and that the terms of the proposed contract with the winner for the execution of the fifteen foot statue are fair to the sculptor and will also protect the interests of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

The sympathetic understanding of the sculptor's point of view by the committee from the Liturgical Arts Society has made it a pleasure to coöperate with them. It is the earnest hope of the National Sculpture Society that the final result will be a successful and inspiring work of art.

HERBERT ADAMS
*Member, Committee on Competition Program
of the National Sculpture Society.*

THE PROBLEM viewed from the angle of the architect appeared to be to design, in the midst of somewhat chaotic surroundings, a suitable framework to contain a monument of Christ, the Light of the World, symbolized in the form of a large bronze statue placed against a white stone wall of monumental proportions and dignified classical simplicity. The statue itself, fifteen feet from head to feet, is approached by a series of landscaped terraces and pedestal which build up to the level of the figure. This treatment is intended to create an atmosphere of serenity and dignity and will also help to detach the figure of Christ from its surroundings.

The entrances to the building were kept small in scale with a view to the elimination of utilitarian implications in

the façade. No windows appear on this façade to mar the scale of monumental character created by the vertical niche reaching to the top of the building.

The general composition of the façade and the location of the statue is of great simplicity in character and extends to a height of ninety feet. The niche has a width of twenty feet and the

entire façade a width of sixty-five feet. It was felt that while a solution of the problem was necessarily monumental and functional, neither should impair the value and effectiveness of the other.

FREDERICK VERNON MURPHY

*Architect of the Building and Head of
the Department of Architecture, Catholic
University of America.*

Plan for a Church

BARRY BYRNE

THE PERSISTENCE of an idea, naturally, is no guarantee of its value. Designing churches in a contemporary and logical way, however, has dominated my thinking since my student days. I am afraid I usually gave more thought to this problem, which absorbed me, than I did to the day's sermon, when I sat in church, Sundays and feast days, during that youthful period of my life. While a good many years have passed I still have a clear recollection of the unusually sonorous voice of one of our curates, as a sort of tonal background, on the eventful Sunday when the mists cleared from my mind and I saw how this difficult question should be approached.

The church itself in which I sat was of a kind calculated to stimulate one to active, critical thinking. It was almost unique in its garish shoddiness, and its reputed architecture was of bad Italian Renaissance forms, further mutilated by the effort to achieve a fairly practical seating arrangement for the congregation. When the choir lined up at the rail of the side organ loft, we were treated to the spectacle of the soprano and contralto soloists elbowing one another for the most conspicuous positions in which to demonstrate their vocal prowess and the banality of Rossini's music. As the building had also been decorated by an imported Italian, at great expense and with no taste, it became almost a specimen piece of all that was bad, or highly objectionable, in our churches.

As I have said, the disagreeableness of the place, in which there was something that savored of an inverted type of unity, increased rather than lessened my desire to achieve a pure, true church

form. The idea that came to me that Sunday in spring seemed a simple one. I would later find how difficult it was in the years I devoted to pondering it and to rounding it out. The fact that it was a generic idea made me hopeful, for, granting the limitations of my talent, the religious training I had received made me aware of the spiritual value of basic things in promoting the best end. As the idea had a broad and general basis, it also promised to keep the resulting architecture from being *merely* original, for originality was not my aim. What I saw, in my mind's eye, and in contrast, was a better identity of church architecture with its religious purpose, with its contemporary use, and with modern structural systems. If this identity were achieved, the road would be opened toward a living, contemporary architecture.

Recalling the idea prevalent in Church circles: that past architectures are sacrosanct and to be regarded as part of Catholic tradition (as if tradition excluded the contribution of current life) makes me now regard that boy of nineteen with something akin to wonder. He, for it now seems as if it was another person who embarked on that hazardous venture, was indeed fortunate that his vision of possibilities was not so complete that it included a knowledge of the stamina-trying years of disappointment that were ahead. The opposition that I met, formidable and door-closing, increased my determination. In contrast, the temptation to forgo my purpose came to me, somewhat as it came to Job, not from those who opposed me but from my well-wishing friends who counselled me to give up my idea and to exploit my

talent to my financial advantage. There were some who fully understood what was in my mind. And it is difficult to give an adequate idea of the compensation there has been in the loyalty of these friends and in the consciousness of their spiritual understanding and support.

Deeply conscious, as I have always been, of the Church as a living organism, I looked upon the dead architectures as envelopments of musty, discarded clothing for her. This was in my mind that special morning, and I saw that if our architecture was again to be a living, rather than a dead thing, it would be necessary to rediscover its basis. On what was it predicated? What was the nature of the building and its functions? These underlying facts, it was evident, were embodied in the building plan, and if a new and logical church plan were to be achieved, it was also evident that that plan would beget a living architecture. The plan was the cause; the enveloping form of architecture, integrated with the plan, was the effect resulting from that cause.

THE APPROACH to the problem for which I sought a solution, therefore, resolved itself into one of analysis, breaking down the functional parts of the church plan, so that, by free examination, we might again acquire a sense of their individuality and uniqueness. Such an analytical examination of these parts, when released from the strait-jacket of a moribund type of traditionalism, would enable us to regain a sense of the alive quality of these functions and of the right concurrence of architectural spaces and forms with them. To make dead architectural forms live in an expressive, plastic sense is an impossibility, for that is like trying to give a corpse the simulation of life. At its best such an effort can only result, as Walter Knight Sturgis has said, in a sort of agreeable taxidermy. It is essential to a living architecture that the parts themselves have the quality of life.

Analysis would, as I saw it, be followed by synthesis, or the re-grouping of the church parts, not primarily on the basis of tradition, but rather on the basis of the rubrics and of functional usefulness and appropriateness. If the parts of an architecture live, granting the vigor and logic of a unifying and religiously imaginative architectural idea, the total will also convince the world of its life-quality. To bring the result to the

plane of architecture, through this imaginatively conceived synthesis, required a new unity, one in which the relative importance of each function was made evident in the architecture.

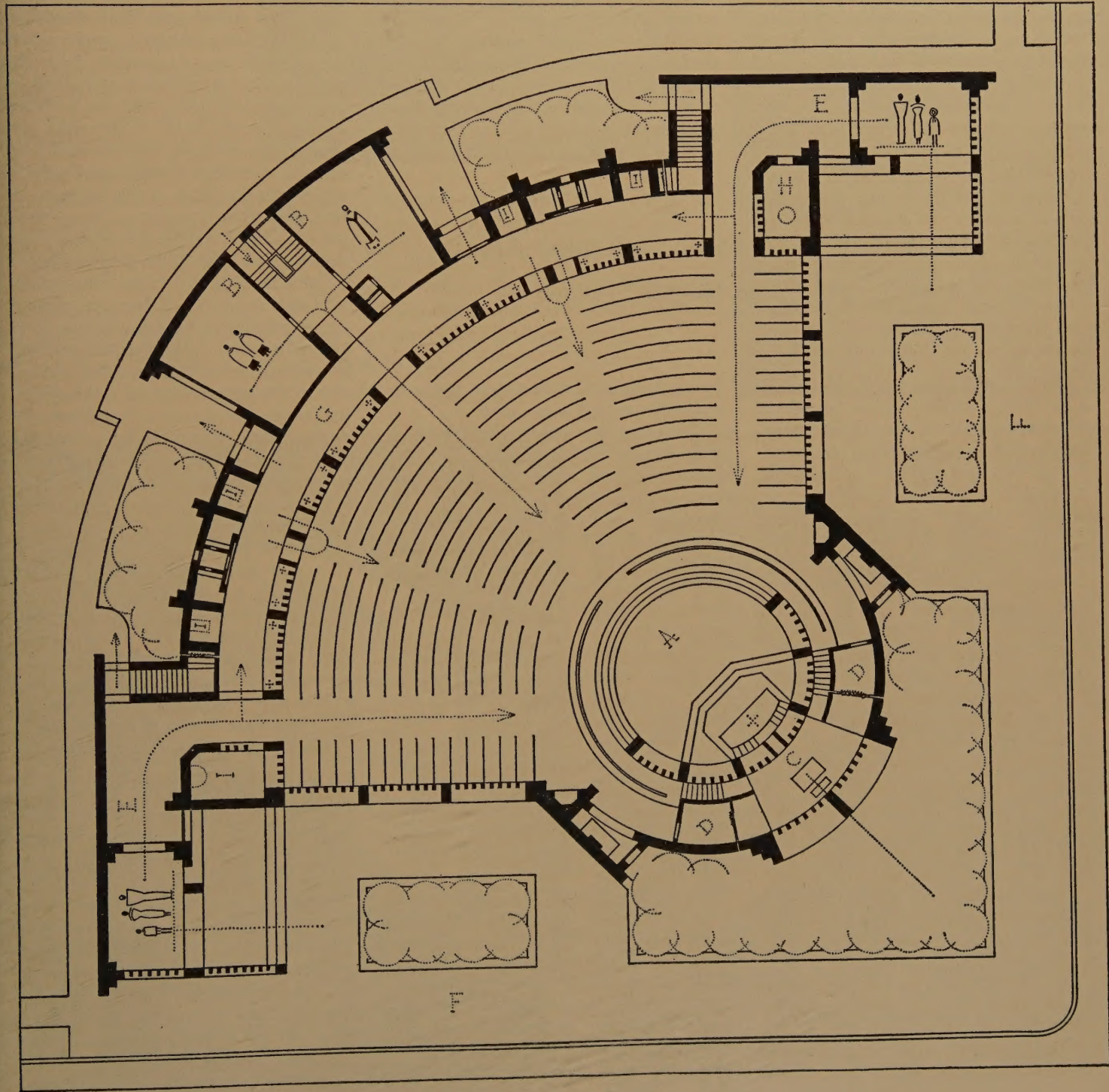
The various church plans and buildings that have appeared over my name have all been the result of an effort to achieve this type of architectural unity. That these plans have had the virtue of being practical I think most persons familiar with the buildings in case will agree. In publishing the one that accompanies this article, therefore, I am

proposing it in a somewhat suggestive sense and with a view to discussion. It, like my other plans, represents an effort to reintegrate the church parts on the basis of the dominance of the eucharistic liturgy, so that the plan and enveloping architectural form will be expressive of the primacy of that function. The sanctuary, therefore, and not the entrances, is the dominating element of the building composition, both in the building mass and in location.

An added sense of the significance of the moment when the celebrant passes

KEY

- (A) Sanctuary. The high altar is a focal point in the church and the axis of the two entrances converge at the center of its face.
- (B) Sacristies. The choir vestry is under these sacristies. A confessional is shown off the priest's sacristy to care for pre-mass confessions.
- (C) Choir.
- (D) Working Sacristy and Storerooms.
- (E) Entrances and Porches. Supplementary exits where indicated by arrows.
- (F) Street Sidewalk.
- (G) Arcaded Aisle. Shrines, confessionals and Way of the Cross stations are in this aisle. The stations are on the sides of the piers that separate this aisle from the pew section. Fixed kneelers are intended, facing them.
- (H) Baptistry.
- (I) Shrines.



from the people, going up into the sanctuary, would result from the location of the sacristy at the rear of the congregation. This location follows a suggestion of Father Gilbert Winkelman, O.S.B., and with a wide, shallow church, and with the entrances separated as they are, such a placing becomes feasible. The suggestion of symbolism in this arrangement will be evident. It creates a condition in which the priest appears to be carrying the people's worship with him up to the altar. There is here, also, a natural basis for the procession of choir, acolytes, and ministers without its being unduly long, or appearing improvised. It would have the quality of inevitability, one that is innate in the liturgy itself.

The location of the way of the cross in the plan further typifies this move

toward a new integration. It is in the rear, arcaded aisle and so located that a person making the way does not float about the church. Such a person would indeed be somewhat isolated from traffic and would be able to pray and meditate in front of the cross and tableau, undistractedly, and with the opportunity of concentrating on the Passion.

As in my other designs, but here with a stronger emphasis, the centre of plan and architectural treatment lies in the eucharistic altar. The converging lines of the building, the grouping of the people around the sanctuary, the elimination of all extraneous or competing elements relate well with a contemporary, functional simplification, and an opportunity is created for making compellingly evident in the architecture, the central Fact of our faith and worship.

The Evolution of Polish Religious Art

IRENA PIOTROWSKA and MICHAEL TARNOWSKI

AS POLAND has remained faithful to the Catholic religion throughout the centuries up to the present time, Polish religious art has always been produced; there was never a time in Poland which did not bring forth artists devoting their talents to the Church. Nonetheless in its historical evolution Polish religious art has had a great rival — the patriotic art of Poland. The selection of subjects for Polish art, then, has always been suggested by these great sentiments inspiring the Polish nation, which were, in turn, dominated by the nation's attachment to its religion and by love of the country; at times these sentiments blended together into one.

The evolution of Polish art may be divided into three periods: the period of predominately religious art, which lasted from some time after the arrival in Poland of Christianity from Rome in 966 to the time of the partitions of Poland at the end of the eighteenth century; then the period of patriotic art, which lasted throughout the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth — that is, during the time of Poland's lost independence. The third and last period began with the establishment of Poland as an independent republic after the first World War, when along with

patriotic themes, the religious began to appear more and more often.

Thus since the very beginning of the evolution of Polish art and for long centuries during the past, Polish sculpture and painting illustrated the New Testament and the lives of the Saints almost exclusively. Only foreign artists, called by Polish kings and notables to adorn their palaces, preferred to represent historical events or to specialize in portraiture.

Polish religious art developed chiefly in cities, where the artists were organized into guilds. In principle, in the mediaeval art of the guilds the artists were compelled to conform to certain strictly fixed patterns and regulations. We must, however, not forget that within the framework of these regulations there was enough room for the artist to develop his individuality: within the framework of these rules some created masterpieces that have endured for centuries. For the regulations of the guilds were established not in order to impede artists in their artistic development, but in order — if it were possible — to prevent the untrained and the negligent finding their way into art. Neither did the Church of those days check the development of art. On the

contrary, thanks to her protection and her teachings art made its most memorable flights. In a word, the flowering of the religious art of the middle ages was a result of a common effort of the artist, the Church, and the whole community. While the Church sustained with understanding all that artists created, these, in turn, did not aim at mere "originality," did not think of "self-expression," of unloading their own individuality, but tended consciously and purposefully to perfection, patterning their work either on that of local masters, or traveling abroad in order to learn from others what they should do and how. They desired to create works of art as perfect as possible from the point of view of execution and choice of material as well as from the point of view of form. In the field of the useful arts they tried to have the objects which they created correspond most accurately to their purpose, and in the domain of fine arts they sought to have their paintings and sculptures express most sincerely the spirit of the subject matter.

And here is a characteristic fact: although the artists of that time did not aim at originality, the great among them created original works. For that originality came of itself. Although they did not aim at the presentation of their subjective views, and consciously did not seek any novelties, they arrived at new forms. New characteristics appeared of themselves in the course of the development of the artistic individuality. And in this manner there arose the development of art, which grew slowly but systematically, and neither the Church nor the community opposed this development. At that time art was valued by its contemporaries just for what it was, something absolutely necessary, and the measured systematic transition from style to style was looked upon as a natural thing, as a result of the persistent effort of artists to reach perfection.

IN SPITE of its national traits, Polish religious art went hand in hand with the evolution of art in other lands. From the very beginning, foreign influences reached Poland from various lands; by no means were they limited to a single source of origin. They came from Bohemia, from Italy, from France, the Netherlands, and other countries. But in spite of the parallelism in the development of Polish art and that of the entire West, certain characteristics took root in Poland more easily than others. So, for example, as in all north-European

THE PARISH CHURCH AT
PIASECZNO, NEAR WAR-
SAW; SEVENTEENTH CEN-
TURY BAROQUE PERIOD.
THIS MONSTRANCE IS THE
PRODUCT OF THE TORUN
WORKSHOPS IN POMERA-
NIA. IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN
A GIFT OF THE FAMOUS
KING JAN SOBIESKI, THE
RESCUER OF EUROPE FROM
ISLAM INVASION, SINCE
THAT KING'S NAME IS
LINKED WITH THE RENO-
VATION OF THE CHURCH
AT PIASECZNO, WHICH
WAS REBUILT IN THE YEAR
1676 AND ENDOWED WITH
A RICH TREASURY. (RIGHT)
A ROMANESQUE CHALICE
FROM THE END OF THE
TWELFTH CENTURY IN THE
TREASURY OF THE PARISH



CHURCH—FORMERLY AN AUGUSTINIAN PRIORY—AT TSHEMESHO, WEST-
ERN POLAND, PROVINCE OF POZNAN. BECAUSE OF ITS AGE IT HAS BEEN
MISTAKENLY CONSIDERED TO BE A CUP OF DUBRAVKA, A CZECH PRINCESS
WHO, IN 966, INTRODUCED THE CATHOLIC FAITH IN POLAND THROUGH
HER MARRIAGE TO MIESZKO I OF THE POLISH PIAST DYNASTY. THEIR SON,
BOLESŁAW THE BRAVE, WAS CROWNED FIRST KING OF POLAND IN 1025.
(BELOW) SAINT ISIDORE, PATRON OF THE PLOWMEN. (RIGHT) SAINT PETER
CHRYSOLOGUS, DELIVERER FROM RABIES. BOTH BY JANINA KONARSKA



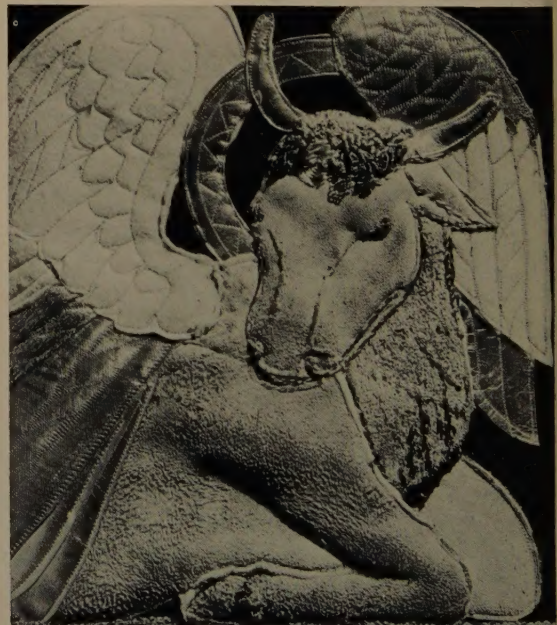
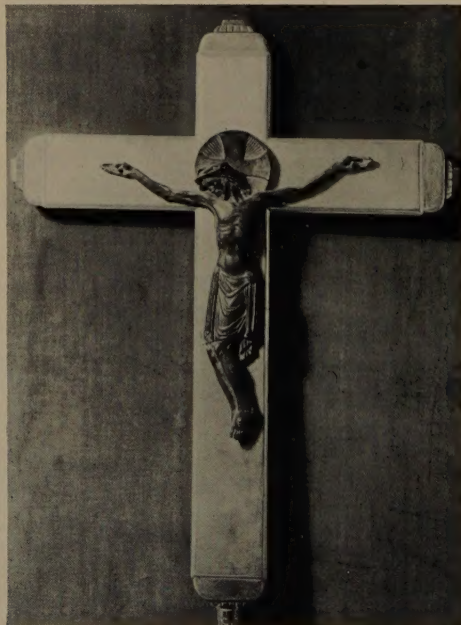
ŚWIĘTY IZDOR, PATRON ORACZY



ŚW. PIOTR CHRZOŁOG OD WŚCIEKLIZNY W WAINIA



ALTAR IN THE PRIVATE CHAPEL OF THE MOST REVEREND EDWIN V. O'HARA, KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI. DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY THE MONTEREY GUILD, CHARLTON FORTUNE, DIRECTOR. CARROLL AND DEAN, ARCHITECTS OF THE ALTERATION OF THE CHAPEL. THE CRUCIFIX IS FROM A MODEL BY ROGER DE VILLIERS





A PANEL OF THE WAY OF THE CROSS IN TERRA COTTA. DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY SUZANNE NICOLAS FOR THE CHAPEL OF THE DISCALCED CARMELITE MONASTERY OF NUNS, 170 STREET AND UNIVERSITY AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY. MAGINNIS AND WALSH, ARCHITECTS



HAVING BEEN JOINED IN THE BONDS OF HOLY MATRIMONY

give thanks to the Almighty for the favors which He has bestowed upon you. The graces you have received have been granted for the purpose of animating you in the discharge of the obligations which the marriage life imposes, and which are beautifully expressed in these words of the Apostle: Let women be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the Head of the Church... Therefore, as the Church is subject to Christ, so also let the wives be subject to their husbands in all things. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life... so also ought men to love their wives as to their own bodies. Ever mindful of these duties which you owe to each other, and to those with whose welfare you may be specially charged, cherish with solicitude the grace that this day has been conferred upon you; it will direct you in every difficulty; it will comfort you in the hour of trial; it will be a continual source of peace, of joy, of mutual affection on earth, and a pledge of your eternal and perfect union in heaven



EGO TE BAPTIZO

May He who has caused you to be born again of water and the Holy Ghost and has granted you the remission of all your sins, almighty God Himself, the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, anoint you with the chrism of salvation in the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord, unto life everlasting Amen

O GOD Who hast wonderfully framed man's exalted nature, and still more wonderfully restored it; grant us, by the mystic signification of this commingling of water and wine, to become partakers of His Godhead who vouchsafed to become partaker of our manhood, Jesus Christ, Thy Son our Lord; who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end AMEN



countries, the gothic style and later the baroque were more in harmony with the Polish spirit than that of the renaissance. Thus it happens that some monuments of Polish art from as late as the beginnings of the sixteenth century still breathe a completely gothic spirit, in spite of the fact that at the same time Italian artists were guests in Poland and took a lively part in her artistic life. In Poland the gothic comes to an end late and the baroque begins early, but all these styles, so different and expressing trends of so distinct epochs, primarily served the Church.

The profound piety of the Polish nation brought about the fact that religious art gave way to secular art much later in Poland than elsewhere in Western Europe. But it was difficult to resist the strongly rising wave very long. Foreign court art of a secular character slowly began to create a strong competition for the religious arts and crafts of the guilds which had been developing in the towns, and by the middle of the seventeenth century it became one of the reasons for the gradual decline of the guilds. Nevertheless up to the end of the eighteenth century, by the side of constantly multiplying works of art with secular themes, there were produced fine religious masterpieces, conceived in the spirit of the times, both in the fine and in the useful arts.

But the tragedy of the Polish partitions toward the end of the eighteenth century centered the attention and emotions of the Polish people upon their country. Thus during the ensuing century and the beginning of the twentieth, Polish art was in one way or another connected with the life of the nation, religious themes being more or less neglected. Subjects were at first taken from Polish history; then slowly Polish artists began to pass to the Polish landscape and to Polish types, and to scenes taken from the life of the Polish peasant. And here we are confronted with a question: did the former religious art, which with such feeling portrayed holy scenes and holy personages, not leave any trace, could it have passed completely, without an echo?

No. Religious art of a partly gothic, partly baroque character has survived in the form of hand colored folk woodcuts and folk paintings on glass as well as in sculptures carved by Polish peasants for the adornment of their cottages and of wayside shrines. For after the decline of the official religious art, the Polish peasant began to create his own

religious images, patterned after those which he had seen in the churches, and in this manner he unknowingly continued the forgotten traditions of the old religious art, although educated circles for a long time did not heed these folk productions.

But it is not to be wondered at that those Polish artists who, toward the end of the last and the beginning of the present century, were fond of re-creating the types, costumes, and customs of the peasant in their art, after a time "discovered" also the arts and crafts of the peasant, together with his painted and sculptured holy images. Modern artists were struck by the charm, directness, and sincerity of these peasant creations. This turning of the newer Polish art toward the folk primitive corresponds to analogical movements in other countries, where, for instance, cubists, expressionists, futurists, infantilists, and others also sought inspiration in the simple and expressive art of the various manifestations of the primitive.

In Poland, this tendency acquired its greatest momentum during the early post-War period, that is, immediately after Poland had regained her independence. But not long afterwards, the majority of the followers of extremely leftist currents returned to nature. Yet they have not forgotten the lessons given them by primitive peasant art. While conceiving their creations in a naturalistic style, they retained the ex-

pressive qualities of the peasant's religious works — qualities, as we already know, inherited by the peasant from times when the Christian faith and the religious spirit had reached their greatest intensity. In this way the professional artist created works of art imbued with a religious fervor, but at the same time entirely modern in execution, naturalistic and therefore easily understandable in form.

In the domain of the useful arts, modern artists learned from the peasant themselves to handle tools, and were reminded by him of that golden rule of long past centuries that form must logically be related to its medium and its function. In consequence they rejected the eclectic imitations of different historical styles and replaced them by forms subordinated to the material used and to the utility of the objects created. They brought about a renaissance of the industrial arts of Poland, and produced, among other things, a number of accessories and ornaments used in divine worship, such as silver chalices, patens, ampullae, and candlesticks, of astounding beauty.

This promising evolution of the modern religious arts and crafts of Poland was suddenly disrupted by the German invasion in September, 1939 — only, we are confident, to be continued as soon as freedom, justice, and peace will be restored as the Polish nation's rightful heritage.

"Holy" Cards and Such

OSCAR OGG

IT IS PERHAPS unkind, but most certainly it is not untruthful, to say that of all the unsuitable, incompetent, euphuistic, sentimentalized art produced to-day, that of the Christian Church is the most persistent offender. Catholic art is by no means less guilty than Protestant. Possessing, as it does, an unparalleled tradition, the Church is actually more deserving of criticism than any of the groups which have separated from her or have been molded after her. The Church should be the leading exponent of only the most perfect in art, architecture, and music.

Catholic music, with the exception of

that produced by a very few groups of interested musicians, either degrades or disregards the rich fund of work composed for the Christian service. Catholic architecture, through the influence of such organizations as the Liturgical Arts Society and of certain intelligent architects, has been given an incentive to deny the long accepted theory that all churches must be covered with gothic ornament. Catholic art, for the most part, is inconsequential as art and, as accoutrement for the house of God, is often an insult to the sensitive communicant.

Yet the fine arts are actually exceeded

in poor taste by the graphic arts. Catholic certificates, "holy" cards, calendars, and pictures not only lack sincerity; most of them are (especially to the non-Catholic) absolutely laughable.

These are generalities and negative at that. However, it is at least pertinent to note that the whole structure of religious art has lost its vitality and hence its authority. What is to be done to effect an improvement in architecture and music must be left in the hands of others better qualified, but I feel that the first step in eradicating current practices in the graphic arts is education. It is in the capacity of missionary, then, that this article is written.

There is no excuse, certainly, for poor work in any field of religious art. For the graphic arts to be allowed to degenerate is more than inexcusable. It is a form of suicide, for the alphabet owes its very life to the Church. During the years when other hordes of destroyers were overrunning the civilized world, the Church kept the knowledge of letters alive within the walls of her monasteries. The scribes of the middle ages developed the most beautiful hands of all history. Every sound letter form of subsequent periods, until the influence of the graver became dominant in relatively recent times, has been based upon the alphabets so excellently evolved from early Roman hands by these faithful servants of the Church. Fine writing was not, we may be sure, an easy accomplishment for the scribe in the monastery. A great many elements which never touch the lives of our contemporary artists limited and dissipated the amount of time available for concentration on manuscript writing. Let us avoid using to-day's "industrialism" and "commercialism" as excuses for our failure to do as well as the monastic artists of ancient times.

The Church made possible fine writing, she invented book decoration as we know it and maintained during trying decades a high standard of excellence in the use of the alphabet. Fine writing — tasteful, sympathetic, suitable for the uses of the Church — is as valid to-day as it was then. Catholic artists might become, if they would, a dynamic influence in a renaissance of letter appreciation. There is nowhere a more fitting place for fine calligraphy than the books and documents in the service of the Church. The Roman forms, the Carolingian script, the uncials and semi-uncials (forefathers of all subsequent hands) reached their peak of perfection by and for Church usage. Translated

into terms of modern life, reproduced and printed by the marvelously effective modern techniques whenever many copies are needed, they are still best suited to liturgical texts. There most decidedly is not, among the numerous modern types and scripts of our commercial artists, a more harmonious medium for spreading the faith than a beautiful, legible, traditional manuscript hand.

IT MAY BE well to interpolate here that the fine types of many of the early designers were based on the written hand and thereby avoid, in any way, inclusion with the majority of modern type faces. The early designers went to the source of the forms for their inspiration — the manuscript. Our present day type "designers" seem satisfied to make copies and interpretations of already existing types. There are, fortunately, a few active type designers who are not wholly unfamiliar with the quill and not wholly slaves to mechanical type cutting.

This is not a plea for a return to the archaic. We who have become sophisticated can no longer revert to the philosophy of simpler times without affectation. We can, however, seek our inspiration in more fundamental sources than the magazine and newspaper advertisement. We can ignore the sophism of "Will it sell?", "Will it attract attention?" and use as our measure of suitability "Is it in good taste?", or better, "Is it as honestly wrought as the message it conveys?"

But getting back to decent letters is not easy. There is rather more to the job than reading a few books about source alphabets and examining a few fine manuscripts. A great deal of hard, tedious, long, and exacting work is demanded. A lot of serious study and research concerning methods and tools and models and paper and color and printing and a host of related subjects is required. If the young letter artist is to find it important that he make the effort to become a fine calligrapher, he has likewise to have some assurance of finding a patron. The Church most logically fills this rôle.

Why is a well written page superior, for Church use, to a page set in type? There is in man, we are firmly convinced, a natural affinity for fine things. Often this instinct has been educated into stagnation, but the spark still remains. Fine music and literature, great painting and sculpture, more often than not call up a response in even the most unlettered. It follows then that if the

message of the Church is presented to the lay Catholic in such a way that he will be impressed by its physical form as well as by its spiritual content, the message becomes something more than a cheap and tawdry pamphlet. We insist on altars, sacred vessels, and vestments being worthy — according to our tastes — of their office, yet we often clothe the Word of God in a physical form that even a manufacturer of soap would reject.

The written page, it is true, may be far worse than one set in type. It may be sloppily written, poorly written, written without spirit and it may (all too often is) over decorated and gilded. However, like the little girl with the curl, when calligraphy is good, it is, indeed, very, very good.

To arrive at fine writing, the artist must be primarily concerned with three fundamental virtues. *Legibility* is the first. *Character* and *beauty* are the other two. Together they combine to fill the general demand of *fitness* for a given use.

The principal office of letters is the conveyance of a message. They must, obviously, be legible if they are to perform this duty. If writing is based on a sound skeleton, if it is carefully executed with the proper tool, if the composition is right, the product cannot be anything but legible.

Character in letters results mainly from the possession of those elements which are genuinely calligraphic, that is, genuinely related to the letter tool — in our day, the pen. Skillful execution, without affectation or embellishment, is necessary for letter character. All else will be to no avail if the form chosen is not suited to the ends for which the lettering is intended.

Beauty is less easily defined. The individual letter shapes must be well conceived and thoughtfully written. A certain uniformity among all the letters is required if they are to compose pleasantly. This does not mean that there should be a typelike similarity, a monotonous sameness which disregards the possibility of spontaneous variety; it does mean that the artist must have respect for the "family likeness" of the letters employed. Careful arrangement, with solicitude for spacing, connecting and placing the individual letters, the words, and the lines makes for beauty, as well as legibility and character of the whole.

These three requirements, of course, are the minimum. They cannot be violated, but taken alone they can only

prevent illegible, innocuous, and clumsy letters. Add to them a sound knowledge of letter evolution, a great deal of good taste, capable execution, and a healthy

respect for the art — the product may well be truly inspired lettering, appropriate for the truly inspired message of the Church.

The Stations of the Cross

CARYLL HOUSELANDER

THERE ARE many angles from which an artist can design the stations of the cross. If he attempts an historical representation, his work is doomed to fail in its purpose. The Church, for reasons of reverence founded on sad experience, forbids a too realistic representation of Christ in His Passion.

Far from limiting the artist in his work, this deepens the scope of it. It compels him to choose aspects of the Passion which are not limited by time but continue in the world; to see the Passion as something taking place now.

He will not belittle the part bodily pain has taken in our redemption, but he will see the same redeeming element in our pain, so much less than Christ's but included in His. He will realize the Passion in the mind of Christ and how that continues in us, from the Pope shepherding a broken world to a child weeping over a broken doll.

His work will serve its purpose only if he comes to it from meditation and prayer, from sympathetic experience of men, women, and children, in great humility and restraint. His problem is how to say as little as he can without saying nothing at all.

The Church is a mother teaching her children from a picture book. Before there were printed books, and before laymen could read, they learned the Faith from the pictures that covered the walls of our churches.

Now the stations of the cross are almost all that is left of that tradition. Providence has so arranged it, because learning from pictures means thinking out the meaning for ourselves, discovering with our hearts, and there is no way of learning the Passion of Christ except through the adventure of our own heart.

When we were children, we had in our nursery a picture of a fairy castle with a little road winding around it, vanishing in mists behind some hills. We

used to spend hours and hours imagining where this road led to — in our imagination we walked into the picture and discovered the secret valley behind the hills. Each one of us made a different discovery. One found a town, another a village, another an enchanted wood. We all had different adventures on the way, we met our own giants and dragons, discovered our own enchantments, and were helped by our own magicians and fairies.

We should be able to approach the stations of the cross in the same way, but with one difference. Our valley was a dream valley. Our adventures on the way part of the endless "let's pretend" of childhood. The stations of the cross are real, their road is the road to Calvary, the adventures on the way to it are the truest experience of which we are capable, and it leads to the one reality, Christ.

However little the artist puts down for us to look at, however simple his finished picture, it must show an essential truth. A friend of mine attempted an historically accurate set, but after long research decided that he could be certain only of the pattern of Pilate's sandal. He painted Pilate's sandal with such skill and detail that one simply could not look at anything else.

That is not what I mean by essential truth. A picture of, say, the twelfth station, could show just Our Lord on the cross alone, leaving out the two thieves, the crowds, those at the foot of the cross. That would not be an accurate historical picture, but it would symbolize a truth, the utter loneliness of Christ on the cross. Or it might suggest other thoughts — questions such as: "Why was Christ on the cross?" "Unless the seed fall to the earth . . .," and so on. Unlimited possibilities — but all would start from the one brief point of an essential truth.

There are people who do not find it necessary to use words or ideas for

meditation. We know that we can hear a song sung in a language of which we know not one word, but if the rhythm, the melody of it, finds an answer in our heart, it echoes from our own soul. We can understand it without being able to translate a word of it into our own speech.

For some, prayer is like that. The muted music of the human, suffering Christ touches a responsive chord in their own being. They do not require words and images and indeed cannot use them. They cannot explain. They have no words, even for Christ. Perhaps they do not understand the music themselves. Perhaps if they uttered it aloud it would only confuse the world. It would not sound in their voice as it sounds in their souls.

Occasionally the childhood of love taught by Christ gives to other souls than those a like simplicity, a direct approach. Once, when I had given a set of stations of my own to a convent, I asked a very old lay-sister, on whose verdict I hung my hopes, what she thought of them: "Well, dear," she said, "they do not worry me as they do some of the other nuns, because I always shut my eyes to say my prayers."

But there are others who do like to look at the pictures, and who look at them many times before they, too, learn to shut their eyes to say their prayers.

I am going to look at a few pictures now and write down just what comes into my head, single words, short phrases, whatever they suggest to me; this I shall do, hoping that others, distracted like myself, may discover their own starting point from such elementary meditations.

May that starting point close their eyes one day on everything but Christ, Whom they will see then, not with the eyes only, not only on a crude picture, but everywhere, in everyone, in everything, and not least in their own darkness.

CHRIST is condemned, more by weakness than by malice. Pilate is more weak than sinful, yet, uneasy, aware of the injustice. "I see no cause in this just man."

The real reason? Pilate's position, his prestige, his income. "Are you Caesar's friend?" He has nothing against Christ, even contempt for His enemies. But — Caesar's friend, I wash my hands of it!

Can I condemn Pilate? If it meant my job, my social position, my income, should I not perhaps compromise? Never, it is true, in malice, but how

often in weakness! "Let Him be crucified." If it means even the moral courage to go to Mass from a week-end party, or to keep the fasting and abstinence? If it means a little denial to pay my bills promptly, or to be just in my dealings? Do I never wash my hands of Him to humor the majority, to placate those to whom I am abject, even though in my heart of hearts I despise them?

More weak than sinful, more in cowardice than in malice, yet — uneasy, aware of the injustice, how often do I crucify Christ in my soul, condemn Him to death?

Christ receives His cross, not only the heavy wood two thousand years ago, but the suffering of all times. The conditions of to-day, of the whole world's pain, of the poverty and sweating and grief in my city, and my personal grief. The cross was there before. He did not give us the cross, but He gave us Himself on the cross. Receiving His cross He changed it from heavy lifeless wood to the flowering tree that should bear fruit in all generations.

Receiving His cross, we receive Him.

Jesus falls under the cross. Jesus, who? God Himself. The invulnerable! He has deliberately made Himself man that He may be hurt, may be wounded, may be weak. Why? — for sinners, for the weak, for the hurt. He wants to be like them, to show it.

"I came not to save the just, but sinners."

Jesus falls. He could have been an example to the strong; an example of "mind over matter," of stoicism. He could have gone on miraculously. He fell down on the ground. In Gethsemane He fell down on His face, afraid, wanting to be let off! He falls under the cross, an example to the timid, the frightened, the weak.

Jesus falls under the cross, the cross made of wood, matter, made of a tree that He made Himself without effort, a cross, a thing made by man. He wants to show us what a cross is: material things, man-made difficulties. When I can't stand up to things, He wants to show me something: that I am not greater than Christ, that no one is, that I must despise no one who falls under the cross, that I must be patient with myself.

And when I fall, the first time especially, what a light I have on myself! I thought I was strong, that gross temptation would not move me, that I could be faithful in all sorts of environment. I am down — in the dirt — I

know myself now! But I know God, too, as I did not before. Now I know the radiance of the shadowless light, I know now what sin is.

Before, I scratched at my soul for scruples, concentrated on myself, my "perfection" — now I am in the dirt and I know, and I know what it is to be forgiven, the goodness of God, the mercy of God, God's love! — what can I do but get up, fix my gaze on God and rejoice in Him?

Simon of Cyrene.

He was forced to help Christ.

He thought that Christ was just a poor criminal.

He did not realize the joy that was forced upon him.

After, when he understood? — I cannot guess the Heaven of that!

We are forced to help Christ, to carry His cross with Him.

We think that He is a tiresome relation, or some bore who wants too much attention but cannot be escaped, a fellow-worker who makes endless demands on our sympathy, or a beggar whom we would prefer to pass but somehow cannot.

Or it may be the whole circumstance of our life is a cross, forced on us. We think we chose wrongly. Our job is uncongenial, we could do wonders in another kind of job, we have no scope, it is all wrong, a ghastly mistake!

But it isn't wrong. In the beginning we are forced to share His burden, but it is the only way for us. If we had chosen, we might have missed His cross — we might not have had the chance to help Christ in His Passion. There is no irony in life, only God's mercy.

And when we realize! When we are no longer forced, but every day gladly comfort Christ in all those trying people, gladly share His burden in the world — I cannot guess the Heaven of that. I can only be grateful that I too am forced to take up the cross of Christ and may one day understand.

Jesus meets His mother. His sorrow deeper because of their love. Because of her grief, His grief is limitless. He could have spared Himself this. But He has never spared Himself the inevitable deepening of every experience to those who love, who have the courage to face that responsibility without flinching. He has taught love, He is love, He will not shut His eyes to His mother, will not spare His heart from her. He will not send her away, she meets Him only

to go with Him, to be with Him to the very end.

He meets the women of Jerusalem. He warns them, He does not accept their pity. He warns all pious women who meditate on the Passion, weep before crucifixes of ivory, but not over the Crucified in their souls. Those who have no tears for the children who are heirs to the abuses and cruelties of generations of greed, culminating in the big cities we know, with their slums, their worldliness, their sweated labor, their vice. Those who have no tears for the homeless, the insane, the criminal, the Spanish refugees, the martyrs of Russia, the hunted Jews, the miners underground in the dark, the unemployed! "Weep not for me, but for yourselves and for your children!"

He meets Veronica. His image is on her veil; a bruised face, the beauty hidden by suffering; how like Him to leave only that image of His face to the world!

The veil, white linen, the simple, unfolded quality, the only thing that can receive His impress. The courage of the woman! Facing His misery, touching it, opposing the crowd, ignoring public opinion, the reality of her love!

And now, on the face of the world, not just dirt and misery, but the face of Christ hidden under what we see. Only strong love, courageous, individual, pure, can approach the sin, misery, and pain, that covers the face of Christ now.

CHRIST on the cross.

THEN:

Christ is alone on the cross; they have stripped Him of His garments. The crowds pass by, they do not recognize who this poor man is; He is naked, shamed, counted with thieves; they pass Him by.

His mother must suffer because of Him. He cannot comfort her. He must leave her to His friend, it is because He loves her that He must suffer.

It seems such a failure! Even God is mocked because of His supreme sacrifice to God. His very faith in His Father is used to deny God.

Love holds Him to the cross, He is on the cross because He is love, redeeming, but they will only believe in Him if He comes down from the cross!

Lest even His love should fail, He has nailed Himself to the Cross, He has made sure of His loyalty to us! Lest His humanity fail, He has made sure of having to go on, to stay there, to suffer our blindness, His mother's grief, the shame, the failure, the loss of God.

Perfect love has driven nails into His hands and feet that He may not fail me! "Father, not my will but thy will be done." He has fastened Himself with nails, that when things fail Him, He may not fail.

NOW:

Christ is alone on the cross. Every day I pass Him in the crowd. I do not recognize Him in every poor man. He is poor, humiliated, suspect for His misery. I pass Him by.

To follow Him always, without compromise, I must sometimes grieve some who love me. Sometimes my own parents. "Son, why hast thou done so to us?"

When I try to keep the laws of the Church, which conflict with public opinion, God is the more abused. "A good God would not ask that of you."

His love has turned the results of sin to a cross that redeems. It is love that keeps Him suffering in men, but they will only believe in Him if He will end suffering.

I who am wholly human, afraid, unfaithful, must yet be one with Him. Can I remain faithful when I am misunderstood, when I must give pain where I love, when I am shamed by my sins, when all that I attempt for Him fails? When I experience, as I must, identified with Christ, the loss of the sense of God? When I fail myself? I can only pledge my love and make my promise nails to hold me when there is nothing else.

When it is consummated, completed, He is laid in Mary's arms. He is at peace now! The pain she gave to Him in Bethlehem is at last used up. Now she holds Him in her arms, in peace. Only Heaven waits for Him now.

We must each give birth to Christ in our life, from the hour when He is born in us we must let Him go through His Passion in us; but when it is consummated, when we have given all we have, soul and body, to Him, we shall know what it is to receive Him into our hearts at peace, to hold Him in silence and stillness, waiting only for Heaven.

He is laid in the tomb, and the tomb is not only in the rock, it is every city in the world, every town and village and home, it is every human heart. Christ lies in the tomb now, a few like the ardent boy John and the passionate lover Magdalene seek Him in the cities, in the hearts of men. The crowds still pass by. Christ is in the tomb awaiting the Easter of the world, His Resurrection in us.

Christ,
nailed to the cross,
nailed there by your own will,
for us and with us,
nail us to the cross,
for you and with you.

Make the ardor and the ardent promises
of our youth sincere,
sincere enough to nail and hold us
and keep us faithful
to you.

When our youth passes
and with it our dreams and the ardor of
youth, let us remember our promises
and renew them with the will and the
real love that nailed you to the cross.

When we die
let these nails be in our hands and our
feet.

When we rise again,
let us rise again with the burning stars of
your wounds shining upon us for ever.
Amen.

Recent Publications

LITURGICAL WORSHIP. By Josef Jungmann. Translated by a Monk of Saint John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota. With a Preface by the Right Reverend Alcuin Deutsch, O.S.B. Cincinnati. Pustet. \$1.25.

Some ten years ago the Reverend William Busch, long associated with the Saint Paul Seminary, suggested that no one be permitted to speak publicly on the liturgical movement who had not read the third chapter of Karl Adam's *Christ our Brother*. That chapter is merely Adam's enthusiastic reaction to and illustration of the profound truth embodied in Jungmann's book, *Die Stellung Christi im Liturgischen Gebet*, published in 1925 in the Maria Laach series, *Liturgiegeschichtliche Forschungen*. These facts are recalled by way of "fixing" the author of the book under review, the Reverend Josef Jungmann, S.J., formerly professor at the University at Innsbruck, and a European leader in the liturgical movement since its inception.

In the fall of 1938, when such a thing was still possible, Father Jungmann, at an institute on theology for priests of today, delivered a series of lectures on the nature and basic laws of Christian worship. The lectures were demanded for publication, and now, two years after their appearance in the German original, they make their bow to the English-speaking world.

The subtitle of the work clearly indicates the author's method, "An historical inquiry into its fundamental principles." If the Catholic theologian views everything *sub specie aeternitatis*, Father Jungmann is happily that type of scholar who sees every incidental feature of the present liturgical movement *sub specie traditionis et historiae*. No one, to the knowledge of this reviewer, has better isolated the root essentials of Catholic public worship, none so surely and accurately plumbed the laws of development inherent in the liturgy itself; and none can be so securely confident of the soundness of the tested program of the liturgical movement, because so conversant with the process of "how it got that way." It might be imagined that this historical treatment involves much dry-as-dust collating of facts with a terrifying *apparatus criticus* in the best professorial manner. On the contrary, Jungmann writes with such deftness, directness, and disarming simplicity that the erudition passes quite unsuspected.

The bed-rock definition of liturgy forms the subject matter of the opening lecture. Typical of the manner in which the author can pass from abstract reasoning or historical incident to the world of here and now is the natural introduction of a passage like this:

It is a significant phenomenon that an age which has little taste for corporate and social doing, and in which extreme individualism prevails, has little taste for the liturgy, for its symbols and forms. Such an age may indeed conserve its inherited traditions, but it no longer lives by them. The past few centuries have been designated as an age of individualism; it were nothing short of a miracle had these centuries been an age of liturgical triumphs. On the other hand, it should inspire us with hope and courage that the reawakening of social-mindedness in thought and action had long taken place in the Church, the liturgical consciousness had long been stirring, before the same awakening took place and found expression in public life generally.

The question, "In whom is the liturgy reposed?" discussed in Jungmann's second chapter, affords the author an opportunity for some eminently sound considerations on the general priesthood of the faithful, and its double relationship, to the ministerial priesthood of those in Holy Orders, and to its Head and High Priest, Christ. A lesson is drawn at once:

From what has been said it should be clear, at least to some extent, how well-founded was the statement Pius XI made in his Constitution *Divini Cultus*, in which he spoke of the *actuosa participatio*, the actual participation of the faithful in the liturgy, in divine worship. It should furthermore be clear that we labor best for the

care of souls by stirring up in the faithful a consciousness of the high rank to which they are called in the worship of the Church, by making known to them their priestly dignity, which is nothing more or less than the dignity of a Christian.

For the majority of the readers of *LITURGICAL ARTS*, Jungmann's third chapter will doubtless afford the greatest pleasure. He there discusses with magisterial clarity two inherent tendencies in liturgy, its relation to the beautiful, and its necessary adaptability to the Christian people as a whole. Beauty there must be, as all are agreed. But the ceaseless endeavor to beautify periodically leads to the situation where the art-element has gotten out of hand, to the destruction of the fundamental balance in which beauty is a subordinate factor. Thus speaking of the sequences of the mass, which, originally in dialogue, later formed the nuclear cell of the "mystery" plays, Jungmann sketches the result of over-development on the art side:

Originally, as simple representations of sacred history, they were performed in connection with a liturgical function. But the more they developed and were brought under the elaborating and secularizing influence of dramatic art, the harder it became to find a proper place for them within the framework of the liturgy proper. Hence the history of the mystery play illustrates how, within the liturgy, the increasing development and unfolding of art, dramatic art in this case, bore in its train a centrifugal force. The same centrifugal force we can also detect in the province of ecclesiastical chant and singing. The more elaborate musical art becomes, the more it withdraws itself from the centre of the liturgy; first of all from its spiritual centre, but finally and as a consequence, also from its spatial centre, from the altar.

In dealing with the liturgy's necessary adaptability to the people as a whole, the author states that "we do not come to God as possessing social or any other distinguishing rank. We come to God as a communion of saints whose conversion, whose method and manner of life, is no longer on earth, but in Heaven."

And so the community prayer and the community chant found in the liturgy contain, as is to be expected, a number of traits that have preference over all specifically national characteristics. In liturgical prayer and chant there must prevail a harmony of souls as of those who have been redeemed. It must lead to a feeling of security in God, it must inspire a peace of soul and stir up a spirit of gratitude and thanksgiving. The question here is not whether Gregorian chant presents the only form of community singing authorized in the early Church. Rather it is a question of emphasizing that all singing in church should be appropriate to the general character of the liturgy and therefore must have something of the spirit of the chant or group singing.

The length this review is assuming is indicative of the importance attached

to this book. The translation is smooth, idiomatic, and accurate. Unfortunately no topical index was included. Would that we knew what has become of the author, and what the chances are that he will enrich us with further such books.

GERALD ELLARD, S.J.
Saint Mary's College
Saint Marys, Kansas

A SHORT BREVIARY FOR RELIGIOUS AND THE LAITY. Edited by Monks of Saint John's Abbey. Collegeville, Minnesota. Saint John's Abbey Press. \$2.85.

A realistic solution of some of the difficulties preventing widespread use of official liturgical prayer by the laity has just come from Saint John's Abbey Press, Collegeville, Minnesota. It is a beautiful little book entitled *A Short Breviary*.

The very first problem which it boldly confronts and solves is the length of time required to pray the whole of each day's office. The hours, as contained in the new book, "are simplified by abbreviation rather than by a change in the essential, organic structure of the Roman Breviary. . . . The departure consists mainly in the reduction of the number of feasts, psalms and lessons." Each day's office as contained here is thus complete and can be said privately in about half an hour.

The next striking feature of *A Short Breviary* is designed to do away with whatever difficulties the Psalmist himself might offer. A title is prefixed to each psalm indicative of the sentiments it expresses, and the various divisions of the poem are pointed out by pithy little rubrics inserted in the margin between the different parts. Very short footnotes complete the explanations given by serving as guides to the function of each of the different hours in the sanctification of the day, as well as the sequence of the days of the week. This masterfully concise integration of the divine office is bound to increase the understanding of it for whoever will use this book, and by making the recitation of the Psalter more intelligent, it cannot but increase the devotion of those who use it and attract others also.

Evidently the editors have spared no pains in procuring the very best possible renditions of the various hymns, and the result is well worth their care. In the lessons the recently published American translation of the New Testament is used, and in the psalms the translation

is based on the Douai version, with well chosen corrections and modifications. The book is not only sturdily bound — it's meant for hard use — it is beautifully bound and contains numerous delightfully original drawings, nearly all of them redolent of the symbolism of the feasts they illustrate.

AUGUST D. COYLE, S.J.
Saint Mary's College
Saint Marys, Kansas

THE VOICE OF TRAPPIST SILENCE. By Fred L. Holmes. New York. Longmans, Green and Company. \$2.50.

The dust jacket of this copiously illustrated but nevertheless slender book about the monastic life carries a biographical sketch of Mr Holmes which indicates that he has had a long experience in various types of journalism and that he was for a considerable time associated with the late Senator La Follette. Both of these circumstances are clearly reflected in his book.

For the most part *The Voice of Trappist Silence* reads like an article in the illustrated section of the Sunday paper. This is not said in disparagement, for the book provides a detailed, colorful, non-technical description of the secluded and austere life of the Cistercians of the Strict Observance. Founded nearly 850 years ago, they are to-day represented in the United States by three monasteries: Gethsemani, in Kentucky, since 1848; New Melleray, in Iowa, since 1849; and Valley Falls, in Rhode Island, since 1900. Most of the material in the book was gathered during many visits to Gethsemani and New Melleray. The account is the work of the newspaper man, and of it the Abbot of New Melleray says, in a brief introduction to the book: "Every effort has been made by [Mr Holmes] to portray faithfully our mode of life and it is our belief that he has well succeeded."

Into the newspaper man's account, the political and economic liberal has made four significant interpolations. These develop the thesis that the way out of the confusions and disorders of the times and toward economic and social justice for all men and "the achievement and perpetuation in our times of the ideals of democracy of the founding fathers" of this country is through moral renovation. Reflecting on his observations at Gethsemani and New Melleray, Mr Holmes sees a correlation between the vow of chastity and the development of character; between the vow of poverty and the proper evaluation of ma-

terial possessions; between the vow of obedience and political self-government; and between the rule of silence and peace of mind and soul. Thus does he "translate . . . into terms of a workable practice for common men" the message of the voice of Trappist silence.

Several of the many photographs in the book suggest that the main altar and interior of the church at New Melleray do not exemplify the best standards of liturgical art.

EDWARD L. SHERMAN
New York City

HISTORIA DEL ARTE HISPANICO.
By the Marques de Lozoya. 1940. Barcelona and Buenos Aires. Salvat Editores, S.A. \$10.00 per volume. (Volume III.)

The third volume¹ of the *Historia del Arte Hispanico* covers the late gothic and renaissance periods in Spain, Portugal, and Latin America. As in the previous volumes, the author stresses the literary influences, and the cultural significance of the arts, tracing their relation to political events and social conditions. This is highly commendable, as art is the expression of a culture as well as the product of a technique. Yet the present volume gives the impression of being an *ouvrage de cabinet* — a compilation of the findings of other authorities, with little new or first hand investigation.

The freshest material is that which treats of the Spanish colonial expression, and of the reciprocal influence of colonial art on the mother country — a subject to which the author gives special attention in the previous volumes as well as in this one. The importance of this phase of art has but recently been recognized. Considering the paucity of material on South America, the text and illustrations in the present volume are remarkably good, and their incorporation in a history of Spanish art is the more praiseworthy as it is unusual.

The chapters on painting are the best in this volume, as they were in the last. The counterbalance of Dutch and Italian influences is clearly analyzed. This is also the period of the great *rejas*, and it is not surprising that the subject evokes the author's special interest. The illustrations are excellent, and the account of the introduction of the iron industry to Mexico is very significant.

¹ Volume I was reviewed in the third-fourth quarter, 1934, of Volume III of LITURGICAL ARTS; Volume II in the third quarter, 1935, of Volume IV.

The book opens with the period of the first plateresque, when the general form continued the gothic tradition, but when Italian renaissance motifs and conceptions of composition were beginning to find expression in the details incorporated in the general form. The gradual acceptance of Italian forms is set forth in a clear sequence that reveals also the difference in manner of early renaissance art in Spain and Portugal.

The merging of the mudejar and renaissance forms under Charles V to form the "Cisneros style" is a significant episode in this historical progression. Lozoya explains it well, but not as clearly as Emile Bertaux, to whose work he alludes, and one might question his assertion that Sagredos's *Medidas del Romano*, published in Toledo in 1526 and translated into French in 1539, is "the literary initiation of the new aesthetic in France." What of Francis I's importation of Italian artists to France (Leonardo da Vinci died at Amboise in 1519); of the establishment of the Fontainebleau school; of the publication of Serlio's works in French in the early sixteenth century?

This reviewer is more inclined to congratulate the author for having produced his book in the face of great difficulties during the beginning of the Civil War in Spain rather than to criticize. Yet it must be admitted that the beautiful prose is not as polished as in the earlier volumes, the text is made dull by the monotonous enumeration of names and dates of minor artists with factual descriptions of their works, the illustrations are not as carefully selected or as well reproduced, and the editing shows evidences of haste. But the book was in press during the fighting in Barcelona. It is a valuable work in itself, and a triumph under the circumstances.

The bibliography is excellent. This volume was to have included the baroque period, but was apparently rushed to press when the Civil War in Spain began. It is to be hoped that the author will continue his investigations and produce a fourth volume that will also include the nineteenth century. Whether or not we approve the aesthetics and taste of the past century, it is of high interest to us, for it constitutes the immediate background for the world of to-day, and whatever the present turmoil, we must believe that it is a world of promise.

LEOPOLD ARNAUD
Columbia University
New York City

RANSOMING THE TIME. By Jacques Maritain. Translated by Harry Lorin Binsse. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons. \$3.00.

Mr Maritain's book is aptly named. It is a collection of brilliant and profound essays dealing with critical issues of our own times. It aims to "ransom," to "redeem," to "rescue" the truths distorted, concealed, or incomplete in current doctrines and movements. Its purpose is thus doubly positive. The author first seeks to discern the truth where it has been imperfectly expressed, and secondly, to complete it in the light of integral human wisdom. Accordingly his viewpoint is not narrowly philosophic. Natural reason he uses to the fullest under the tutelage of Saint Thomas, but to this is added the precious insights of faith. Moreover, Mr Maritain is especially sensitive to the concrete unfolding of truth in human history. This recalls a second interpretation of the Pauline text referred to in the title of his book. In one literal sense, "Ransoming the time" in the original means "making a market of your opportunities." Certainly Mr Maritain's conception of human equality — the topic with which his book opens — is far more developed and perfect than that of an Aristotle, who held that some men are by nature slaves, and that of a Saint Thomas, who merely improved Aristotle's teaching in the light of the thirteenth century feudalism of the Christian era. In the fullness of time there came the widespread use of beasts of burden which liberated vast numbers of men from a life of animal locomotor tasks; then there came the industrial revolution which increased the productivity of man in a way previously *inconceivable*. Mr Maritain has exploited the "opportunities" for enlightenment regarding human equality pregnant in the industrial era.

Some may be scandalized by the diversity of topics grouped in this single volume. After human equality comes a discussion on the political ideas of Pascal, the metaphysics, ethics, and philosophy of religion of Bergson, the Catholic doctrine concerning the status of non-Catholics before God, the mystery of Israel, the Catholic Church and social progress, sign and symbol, and finally natural mystical experience. However, this is inevitable if one is to "make a market of one's opportunities." Man is a rational animal, not a Cartesian angel, or a Spinozist geometrical figure. Hence the workings of his

spirit are subject to the conditions of unintelligible matter. He progresses spiritually not with the regular sequence of a straight to the mark syllogism, but more like a swimmer struggling against a current — each limb is used successively, not together, in order to advance the whole body and there are setbacks, cross tackings, and periods of rest and drift. If Mr Maritain is to take advantage of our intellectual environment he must, like a good coach, be simultaneously cognizant of the manifold factors involved.

The wholesome diversity of topics as well as the subtlety of Mr Maritain's treatment of them prevents summarizing the finely chiseled argumentation here. The intelligent reader will find throughout wonderfully keen insights that bear eminently practical applications in the world of to-day, especially in the chapter on "The Catholic Church and Social Progress." Moreover, he will find the shining example of Mr Maritain's approach. American Catholicism has too long been hyphenated Irish-American, German-American, Italian-American, or Slavic-American Catholicism. This was inevitable at first because neither the United States nor American Catholicism was much influenced by Catholic settlers of the colonial period. Catholicism grew here not by increment from colonial capital but by relatively recent importations from Europe. Up to now far too many American Catholic attitudes and activities have been determined by old world issues not pertinent to the American scene. For us American Catholics, this represents a failure to "ransom our time." We ought to learn this fundamental lesson from Mr Maritain.

HARRY MCNEILL
Fordham University
New York City

Correspondence

NEW YORK, N. Y.

To the Editor of LITURGICAL ARTS.

Dear Sir:

It seems to me that the caption which appeared under the photographic reproductions of altars, vestments, fabrics, etc. at the exhibition of religious art held at the École du Meuble, Montreal, in the February, 1942, issue of LITURGICAL ARTS, can result in some confusion. The caption would seem to indicate that J. M. Gauvreau and I were the designers of all those objects and that my pupils merely executed

them. Such is not at all the case; with the exception of a few pieces (designed by Marcel Parizeau or myself) all the pieces were conceived, drawn, and executed by the pupils of the École du Meuble. Among those more particularly concerned in this work were Messrs Fournier, Vinet, Touchette, Coutlié, Laporte, Rouillard and Charbonneau. And I must say that I was very much impressed by the wealth of inventiveness and imagination displayed by these young men, close as they are to their farm and craft origins, even when they have received a classical education.

These pupils brought me a great many designs for liturgical fabrics, for decorative schemes or for church furniture, in which originality, taste, and variety were most remarkable. And it was only possible to execute and show a relatively small number of the projects worthy thereof.

The liturgical section of the École du Meuble has constantly been actuated by two important considerations: (1) to effect a close bond between the work of the students and the traditions and methods of native art still so living and vital in French Canada (Province of Quebec) in the sections of the country whence these students originate; (2) to utilize the methods and the materials and even, in a way, the spirit of contemporary industrial techniques.

This was done to bring "liturgical" art as much as possible within the sphere of life itself and living art, and to rid it of all the archaeological trappings which in our times are nothing more than outmoded stage scenery. Our old European churches, whether roman or gothic, are so moving, so religious and so real, only because they spring from the *life* of those past times — they are living embodiments of that life. And no matter how accurately we copy them to-day (after seven or eight centuries) such copies can never be more than an artificial operation, stultifying for the artist himself and thoroughly harmful for the essentially catholic spirit, that is, the spirit universally and perpetually renewed in Christian art. All life is at once continuous and ever new, but art, if it is to remain alive and vital, has greater need for newness than for continuity and liturgical art, more than any other, because the necessary continuity of this phase of art is also conditioned by strict rules and therefore becomes more a prey to fixed formulas and the lazy limits engendered by habit.

It is thus that men become psycholog-

ically unable to *feel* the religious value of a form, of a line, unless this form and line are strictly roman or gothic — or at least unless they can pigeonhole them as such! It is hardly necessary to point out what a weakening of art and of Christian thought all this can produce among us.

We too easily believe that an exact observance of liturgical rules can solve all artistic problems. This is a serious error. The liturgy, archaeology, and art are three different things. A perfectly "liturgical" altar can, at the same time, be very ugly. Such an altar may be perfectly adapted to liturgical norms and yet it can be constructed of atrocious material, bad in color, in proportion. . . .

Finally, it is necessary to recall the extreme diversity of religious sentiment. One of the readers of LITURGICAL ARTS objects to the design of the altars illustrated in the February issue of the magazine on the ground of their being too "pagan looking." What does he mean by that? Can we forget that in the primitive church (which, by the way, we may presume was a rather Christian church) Christian altars were similar to the pagan, and often our early Christian altars were, *in fact*, formerly pagan altars? And have we not also seen certain Hindu temples, certain Musulman mosques, certain Negro or Chinese pieces of sculpture, which are of a *religious* sentiment far superior and purer than the "commercial" music, sculpture, and painting that many of us — priests or laity — endure in our Catholic churches!

So let us try to escape from our lazy and narrow habits of thought; let us restore to Christian art the courage, the frankness, the liberty without which it will never be a living and a vital art, nor yet a truly Catholic art.

It is in that sense that what was accomplished at the École du Meuble, Montreal, gave testimony to a spirit of initiative and of Christian liberty. Through the link of living popular and native traditions we thought that we could interest the people of rural districts in their churches and in encouraging them to work themselves at the task of beautifying these churches. In the cities, on the other hand, the use of modern industrial materials and techniques will bring some degree of unity with the evolution of forms more definitely related to and born of our times.

Yours truly,

M. A. COUTURIER, O.P.

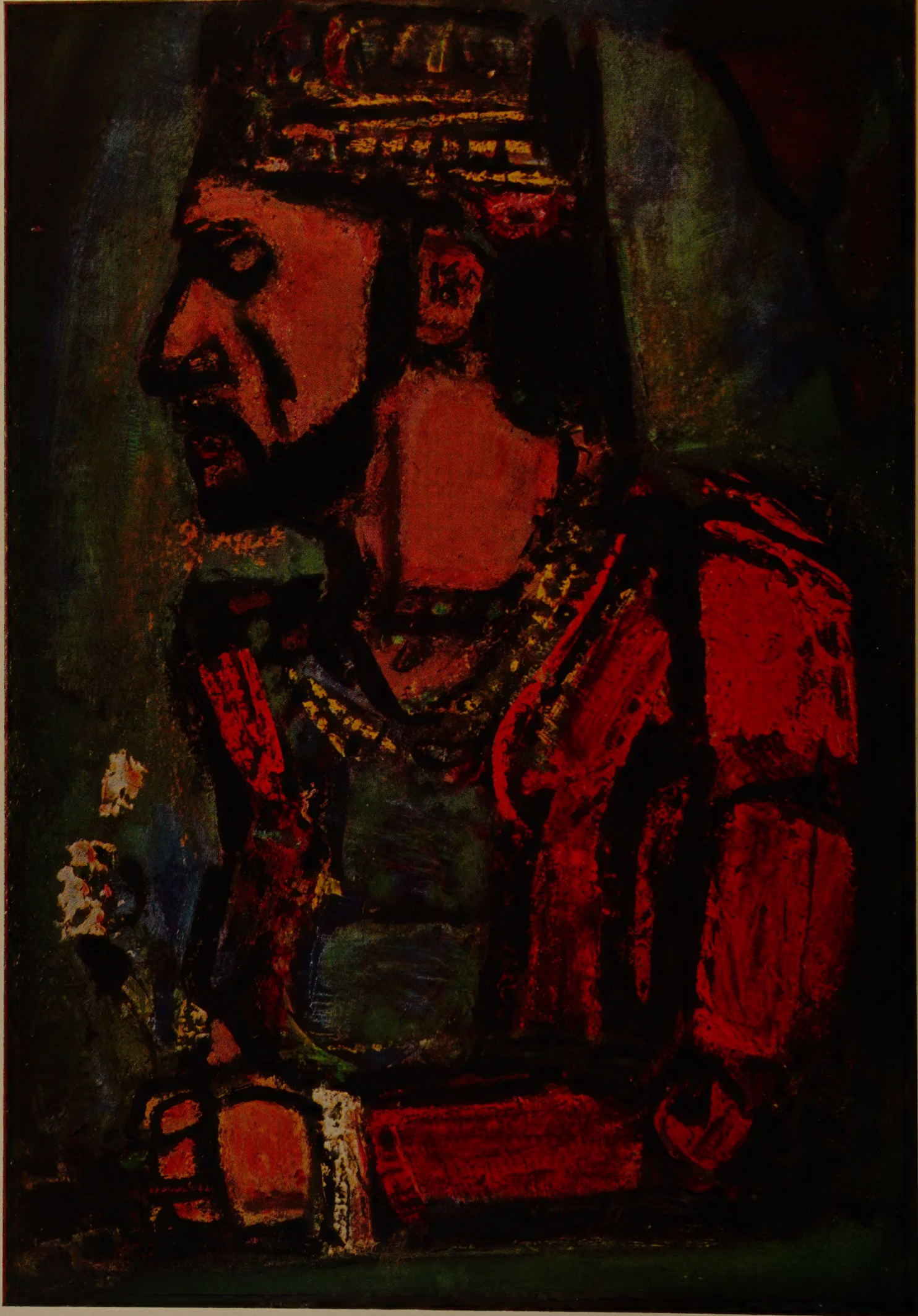
GEORGES ROUAULT (1871-): The Old King

Representing perhaps a David, a Herod, or a Sennacherib, this intense and devout picture by the most vehemently original of twentieth century artists, was started in 1916 and only completed in 1936. Curator of the Gustave Moreau Museum in Paris until the outbreak of the War, Rouault was born during that other German invasion, in 1871. His work does not fall clearly into periods, and the style represented here, in which he still paints, appeared as early as 1908.

Before becoming a pupil of Moreau, and later a member of the *Fauves*, along with Matisse and Derain, he worked in stained glass, a training which has affected him deeply. His heavy black lines, used to separate the areas of tone, create an effect somewhat like that produced by the leads in the thirteenth century windows at Chartres, also recalled by Rouault's intense reds and blues. In essence, however, he is as independent of any past expression as he is of his contemporaries.

(Size of the original: 30 1/4 by 21 1/4 inches)

Text and colorplate courtesy of ART NEWS



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ROUAULT: "THE OLD KING"